



The Spirit of '76 and '88

Number ONE in Ohio!



Newsletter of the Lake Erie Amateur Radio Association

Editor: Alex Manuk, WD8JMM

Publisher: Jeannie St. Marie, KC8MNW

April Meeting—Tuesday, April 26, 2005

A Day--or Month(s)--in the Life of a FEMA agent Deployed in Florida

On the heels of our highly successful annual Skywarn meeting, LEARA is having another disaster-related program. This time, it's all about disaster mitigation, rather than disaster prediction & prevention. Don Wade, W8DEA, a member of the Massillon Amateur Radio Club and one of the ARRL's Ohio Section publicity officers, will share with us his experiences while wearing a different hat: that of a Field Supervisor for FEMA. He was deployed to Florida after their bumper crop of hurricanes hit last November. His deployment stretched out over a 5-month period, so there must be quite a story to tell. During that time, he was deployed in two of the hardest hit counties in the Florida panhandle, the counties of Escambia and Santa Rosa.



Come hear Don tell the story of how he, along with many teams of FEMA agents and untold numbers of other disaster workers and volunteers, helped the citizens of Florida through one of the worst disasters in that state's history.

Dinner is served at approximately 6:30 PM, with the meeting and program beginning at 7:30. Dinner choices (Chicken Parmigiana, Steak, or Broiled Scrod) are 15.00 per person, and reservations are required if you wish to eat. Those wishing to make dinner reservations may call Marv Grossman at 440-248-0031, or make your reservations online at <http://www.leara.org>.

April, 2005

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Who are these strange people, and why are they hanging out with Joe Phillips? For an explanation, see page 7

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<p>The <i>Spirit of '76 & '88</i> is published monthly except in December. Contributions must be received by the 1st of the month.</p> <p>Editor: Alex Manuk, WD8JMM</p> <p>E-mail: editor@leara.org</p>	

de W2THU...

I regret missing probably the largest turnout LEARA has ever had for a Skywarn meeting. The attendance was around 130 and most were not hams. LEARA provided both club and ARRL literature and there were several potential spotters who expressed an interest in ham radio and joining our club. Thanks to Gary Garnet of the Cleveland National Weather Service for putting on another fine spotter class and to our program chair, Sara, KC8KSU, for basically planning a banquet.



For the first time in many years I failed to attend the Lake County Hamfest in Madison, Ohio due to the excessive lake effect snowfall that occurred the first weekend in April. I monitored LCARA's repeater Sunday morning and I heard a lot of nasty road reports including a LEARA member who needed to be towed out of a snow-drift while on his way to the hamfest. The ham who was assigned to the repeater talk-in station was stuck on a closed section of SR 528 south of Interstate 90 for five hours! As I write this column only two days later it is 78 degrees and sunny in downtown Cleveland.

As thoughts of Dayton dance in my head I have been warily watching the effect of our weakening U.S. dollar vs. the Japanese yen. After all, most of the ham gear on the market is manufactured or distributed by Japanese companies. I was wondering when the price of

(Continued on page 8)

LEARA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to Amateur Radio and to Public Service. Club information packets and applications for membership are available from **Marv Grossman, W8AZO, 440-248-0031** or may be downloaded from our web site at www.leara.org. Annual membership is \$18.00. **LEARA's address** is: LEARA, PO Box 22823, Beachwood, OH 44122-0823.

LEARA is an **ARRL**-affiliated club. When you join **ARRL** or renew your membership, **LEARA** benefits monetarily if you do so through the Club. Send **ARRL** applications/renewals to the club treasurer (Dave Foran/WB8APD, 5439 Nan Linn Dr, Willoughby OH 44094-4365). Payment (check or money order) must be made out to **LEARA (NOT ARRL)**

Membership Meetings are held the last Tuesday of each month except December at Dimitri's Restaurant, 1830 Snow Rd., Parma, OH (in the Mid-Town Shopping Center, just west of Broadview Road). Dinner is served at 6:30 PM. The regular meeting begins at 7:30 PM. Meetings are open to all interested persons. You may attend without eating, but **reservations are required** if you do wish to eat. Call **Marv Grossman, W8AZO at 440-248-0031** or make your reservation online at www.leara.org.

Trustees' Meetings are held on the second Saturday of odd numbered months at 9:00 AM at the Parma-Snow Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library, 2121 Snow Rd., Parma, OH (opposite the Mid-Town Shopping Center). Meetings are open to all current members of LEARA.

New Education Committee Formed

de Tom Bishop, W8TAB, John Radney, KC8FOC, and Sara Cechner, KC8KSU

At the March LEARA Trustees' meeting, one of the agenda items was: Club Education Projects. It was pointed out by our President, Bob, W2THU, that several respondents to last fall's Member Survey indicated an interest in LEARA-sponsored license study classes. Since all of our members are licensed as technicians at minimum as a requirement for club membership, we are assuming that you're interested in upgrade classes that will get you to the General and Extra Class licenses.

To help quantify and bring to reality such a project, the Board formed a new Education Committee and appointed Sara, KC8KSU as Chair. Volunteering to assist her in this endeavor were John, KC8FOC, and Tom, W8TAB.

We met as a committee for the first time over lunch following the Trustees meeting and decided that the first priority is to outline a project to bring license classes back to LEARA. Second, the Elmer Program (aimed primarily at helping folks new to amateur radio, though Elmers are willing to help anyone needing help with a project) falls under the new Education umbrella, and will become more formalized. And as a third priority, which dovetails with the first two, our vision encompasses community outreach and education, including introducing ham radio to local schools and community centers. These priorities may change as we evolve. For the immediate future, however, there is just one goal, and that is to answer the needs that were indicated by the survey: to help with upgrades.

In keeping with that goal, we are now seeking additional volunteers that would like to join the committee and/or have an interest teaching or helping to teach these upgrade classes. If you have an interest in the committee and/or teaching please contact Sara, John, or Tom (as noted in the Trustees contact list on page 2) and we will see that you are invited to the next meeting of the Education Committee, or send email to education@leara.org.

Welcome to the Club

LEARA proudly welcomes the following ham who recently joined (or rejoined) LEARA and who has been formally approved by the LEARA Trustees.

Returning Member—Welcome Back!

Warren Fleming, WB8RNY

Please make him welcome when you hear him on the air!

Radio Officer's Report

de Raye Bayun, N8NAP

The following maintenance was recently performed at LEARA's east side repeater site:

Replaced 449.400 receive element in the 444.400 repeater to correct frequency drift with temperature change.
Aligned to factory specs.

Replaced 146.16 main receiver in the 146.76 repeater with one that has factory spec. sensitivity. It looks like the mixer transistor degraded or got noisy.

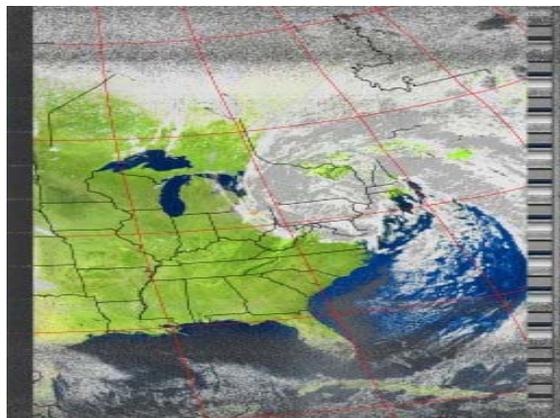
Strapped 52.23 link receiver in the 53.23 repeater for full time CTCSS (pl) of 136.5 and checked.

Reset controller clocks for time change.

It's Fox Hunt Time Again!

de Mike Cegelski, K8EHP

Welcome fellow hunters of furry critters of the RF kind! Sunday afternoon, 15 May, 2005 will see the first event of fox hunting for 2005. The 8th is Mother's Day so the next Sunday is the one. The territory, starting place and other details will follow. If anyone wants tutoring (lessons) on fox hunting and/or building simple equipment for same, please notify me at (216) 252 - 6640 or k8ehp@earthlink.net. We'll have a group or individual sessions as the need (s) dictate. If you know of someone else who would like to do this activity, please feel free to bring them along. While RSVP is not necessary, it's always a good idea to let me know ahead of time if you plan to attend. Tally Ho!



Digitally enhanced weather photo copied from a weather satellite by Joe, KC8RAN. See Joe's article on Satellite Radio on page 4!

Space and Ham Radio—Part Four

de Joe Prokop, KC8RAN

Many hams start out as an SWL, captivated by the ability to receive signals from far away places. From the middle third of the 20th century until recently with the Internet and 24 hour news cycle, radio signals received from afar was key to making the world seem a little smaller. We have the ability to literally see from afar, in real time, to see what the Earth looks like using signals sent from weather satellites.

During the hurricane season, the best view of hurricanes forming and moving toward land masses is from above using the fleet of GOES satellites in geosynchronous orbits. Many of these pictures can be easily accessed on the weather service website. These signals can also be received by anyone with the proper receiving equipment as well, either from the satellite or from relay stations broadcasting on the HF bands.

What I'm going to touch on are the fleet of polar orbiting satellites that send pictures in the VHF band that many receivers today can tune. There are currently 3 active satellites that send APT (automatic picture transmission) signals at 137.500 and 137.620 Mhz FM (+/- 2 Mhz doppler shift during the pass). Two of the satellites, NOAA-12 and NOAA-15, transmit on 137.5. The third one, NOAA-17, transmits on 137.62. Each satellite is orbiting at a height of around 800 kilometers. A fourth satellite is tentatively scheduled for liftoff in May, pending passing flight readiness testing.

The NOAA satellites transmit both infrared and visible light pictures at a rate of 120 lines per minute. There are sync pulses that give a distinct "tick" similar to what you would hear on WWV, only they occur at a rate of about 2 per second. The sounds between the ticks contain the information that "draws" the picture taken by the satellite.

Thanks to the capabilities of sound cards in PC's today, we can decode these signals with ease. There are many freeware and shareware program available on the Internet. The one I am currently using is WXTToImg, a freeware program available at www.wxtoimg.com. It has many feature to process and edit images. It also has the ability to predict passes and can automatically record images when the pass is in range.

Signals can be taken directly from the headphone jack if you use minimal levels on both the radio and sound card. However, to improve signal to noise performance, I use a voltage divider circuit so I can set the volume control higher on the receiver and the sound card. The divider cir-

cuit is simply a 100K and 470 ohm resistor connected in series. The input to the PC sound card is connected across the 470 ohm resistor through a 1:1 isolation transformer to keep the PC and radio isolated. This transformer also has a bandwidth slightly higher than 3 khz, limiting higher frequency noise from passing into the sound card. You can experiment with values to optimize the divider for your radio and computer.

After doing the needed adjustments to the volume levels of the sound card and the radio with the imaging program, you will begin to see the received image real time as taken from the satellite sensors and cameras. The image will be both the IR and visible light pictures. As the image begins to unfold you may notice the visible light shows the earth and clouds in gray tones, and you should be able to pinpoint some landmarks, particularly the Great Lakes, major rivers and coastlines. Expect the image to be noisier at the beginning and end of the pass. But with a good antenna and receiver, you may be able to copy signals long enough to see just south of Cuba on the southern part of the image.

Even though the visible light image is attractive, particularly when the skies are generally clear, the real "cool" stuff is in the IR image. I emphasize cool as the temperature decreases as the altitude (and mass) of the cloud increases. The IR image, like the IR equipment used by the military, shows warmer areas as brighter and cooler areas as darker. Using the IR image imposed over a map image will show where precipitation is more likely by darker images. The comma shaped formation of a powerful low pressure area is very evident in the IR image.

NOAA-17's orbit currently passes over in the mid day hours, between 1500 and 1700Z. This pass comes from the North (on what's called a descending orbit). NOAA-12 and 15 travel closer together and are good sources form morning and evening passes. In fact, because of the angle of the Sun being lower, you can see textures in the cloud deck better on the morning and evening than on the overhead passes of NOAA-17.

The exact times of passes can be found using prediction software, available as freeware or shareware. The AMSAT (www.amsat.org) website has pass prediction shareware available. The WXTToImg software I use also has pass prediction. Resources and information on imaging satellites can be found on the websites www.rig.org.uk/ and www.drigrig.com. Contact me at kc8ran@cox.net if you have any questions. Next month: linear transponder (CW and SSB) satellites.

Repeater ABC's—part 5 of a series

de Eric Jessen, N8AUC

Repeater Etiquette

Remember your first time on the repeater? How nervous you felt? The butterflies in the pit of your stomach? I do. For some of us it was a lot longer ago than others, but at some point we all felt it. Over time, as you grew accustomed to ham radio, you began to feel more comfortable, because you began to pick up on the language, and the customs of Amateur Radio. Some of you had to leave behind words and techniques that were perfectly acceptable on other bands, and in other places.

That's the hard part of getting in to amateur radio, especially if you got your start in a different radio service, like a lot of us did. Part of becoming a ham, is to embrace and practice what is called "good amateur practice". If you want to be accepted and recognized as part of the group, you need to adopt "good amateur practice". Part of that is learning and using proper etiquette on the air. This isn't etiquette like Ann Landers or Dear Abby would tell you about. This is about proper Amateur Radio Etiquette. In general, you want to:

Listen before you transmit. When you were born, you were given two ears, and one mouth. I think there's a good reason for that. Specifically, you should listen twice as much (or more) as you talk. Besides, FCC rules prohibit deliberate interference (which will eventually get your privileges and license pulled), and jumping on top of a conversation in progress is just plain rude. No one likes rude people.

If the repeater isn't being used, and you want to let us know you're there and ready for a contact, key your mike, wait about one second (to allow the linked receivers and voter to work), and then say, "This is N8AUC listening", then unkey the mike and listen. Of course if you're not me use your own call sign instead. You might get a reply right away, and you might not. That's just the luck of the draw. If you don't get a reply right away, just be patient and try again in a few minutes.

If a conversation is already in progress, and you'd like to join in, wait for one of the other stations to unkey, and just say your call sign. Then wait to be recognized, at which point you can join the conversation in progress. As a point of emphasis, don't break into a conversation just to break in. If you don't have something pertinent to the topic being discussed, just sit back and listen. Unless you have emergency or priority traffic, but that's an entirely different matter. One other point, don't hijack someone else's conversa-

tion. If the people engaged in a conversation are talking about antennas, don't jump in and start talking about cars, or something else. That's rude. Don't be rude. No one wants to talk with rude people.

If you have priority or emergency traffic, like you just saw a car accident and there are injured parties involved, then wait for one of the other stations to unkey and say, "Break" followed by your call sign for priority, or "Break Break" followed by your call sign for emergency traffic. The other stations should recognize you immediately and then stand by to allow you to pass your priority or emergency traffic. Just a hint here, don't misuse this. Remember the story about the "little boy who cried wolf"? It could happen to you!

Drive time, rush hour, call it what you will, but repeater activity is at its highest during those times. You will probably encounter large round table discussions, with lots of people checking in and out all the time. If you're operating from a fixed station (lucky you - you aren't in traffic with us) don't monopolize the repeater during drive time. Keep your transmissions short so those people in mobile stations can use the repeater. No one wants to listen to a dissertation. And besides, with all those people on the road, just dying to perform some career limiting, death defying, stupid human trick while driving, someone will inevitably NEED to use the repeater to report an auto accident, or to summon aid for persons injured in one. Don't prevent help from being summoned because you were being long winded. Not only is that rude, it's incredibly selfish. Good amateur practice requires us to realize that all frequencies are shared, and that our rights end when they begin to deprive someone else of their rights, and to conduct ourselves accordingly. Make sure YOU observe good amateur practice.

Language, specifically what you can and cannot say on the air. Sorry, but this isn't the Howard Stern show, it's not broadcast radio or TV, and there is no "safe harbor" in amateur radio. What they might be able to get away with, we can't, and neither can you when you are sharing the airwaves with us. Unlike CB, we DO have enforcement of the rules in Amateur Radio. Keep your language clean, squeaky clean. What might be an acceptable part of your personal vocabulary in person, probably isn't acceptable over the air. Even casual expletives that might creep into your every day speech are NOT acceptable over the air. Remember, there are a lot of people listening on scanners (who might want to become hams someday), and people have kids in their cars. If you wouldn't want your four year

(Continued on page 6)

Repeater ABC's—cont'd

(Continued from page 5)

old child repeating it, don't say it over the air. If your other would have scolded you for it when you were a child, don't say it over the air. Being mindful of this, and acting accordingly might be more difficult for some people than others. But let me assure you it is NOT optional. Besides, hams have a long and proud tradition of being "a cut above the ordinary". Honor that long and proud tradition by conducting yourself in a manner that is above reproach. Not only that, but you only get one chance to make a good first impression. Don't blow that chance. You never know where it may lead, or who you may meet over the radio.

Nets. Nets are basically an "on the air" meeting of people who have something in common. They can be a lot of fun. Most are casual, some are not. If a net is in progress, listen to what is going on before jumping in. If there is someone performing the duties of a net control station, then that person is in charge of the net. Some nets, like our weekly club net welcome all comers. In fact, I'd recommend that you participate in our weekly club net. It's a great way to get familiar with net operations in general. Some nets are very serious, like the Skywarn net. Those are directed nets and depending on what they are tracking, they may not want just anyone and everyone checking in. They may be tracking a specific storm and be watching for specific conditions like a tornado, or one of its precursors, like hail. Checking in with a "sunshine report" at that particular time is a very bad idea. Some nets are disciplined nets, like NTS traffic nets that exist for the purpose of handling third-party traffic. NTS nets typically welcome newcomers, but only after any traffic has been handled. We don't currently host an NTS traffic net, but some other repeaters in the area do. If a net is using the repeater, then for the time they are there, they have priority over casual users. Please observe this. The only exception would be if you have emergency traffic yourself.

Public Service Events: These are usually run as directed nets in support of some activity like a marathon race, a bike-a-thon, a soccer tournament, or perhaps it might be an ARES Disaster Drill. Please don't interrupt a public service in progress. We offer six repeaters on four bands for your use. A public service event will only use one, but it will use it for an extended period of time. Use one of our other fine repeaters when an event is in progress.

Station Identification: The FCC requires you to identify your station at the end of every contact, or every ten minutes during a contact. Do identify, simply say your call sign in plain english if you're using a voice mode. And since we're talking about repeater operation here, chances are pretty good you're using a voice mode. Don't get cute. Just

say your call sign as it is printed on the license that the FCC granted you. One little thing to avoid, is adding "for id" or "for identification" after your call sign. Of course you were identifying! We all know that! Why else would you say your call sign? It's redundant, and totally unnecessary.

Lingo: You may have been accustomed to using cute little terms and phrases on other bands. Some hams do this too, much to their detriment. If you want to be a ham, then be a ham, and leave the lingo behind. Since the FCC rules require you to identify in plain English, you should continue that and speak clearly in plain English when using voice modes. If you want to laugh, just laugh, we'll be able to tell you are laughing. Using the old telegraphers abbreviation for laughter "hi hi" isn't appropriate. The use of phonetics are only necessary when signals are marginal and hard to understand. If you're full quieting into the repeater, you don't need and shouldn't use them. Q signals should not be used on voice modes, they are meant for CW, and are extremely useful when both stations do not speak a common language (think international DX here).

Observing proper etiquette on the air will help you be welcomed into the ranks of top notch ham radio operators much quicker. After all, isn't that why you worked so hard to pass the test to become one of us?

Until next time.see you on the air!

Net Reminder

The Lake Erie Amateur Radio Association's weekly net is held every Thursday evening at 8:00 PM on the 146.760 (-offset, 110.9 PL) repeater. This is an open and informal net intended to provide the opportunity to test radio equipment, promote fellowship among local amateur radio operators, and develop radio traffic handling skills.

Also, with the beginnings of severe weather season, Cuyahoga County Skywarn is holding weekly practice nets on Wednesday evenings at 8:00 PM on the 146.760 (- offset, 110.9 PL) repeater. Membership in Skywarn is not required to check in to the net.

Please support these nets by checking in as time permits.

RECAP OF THE 2005 ARRL GREAT LAKES DIVISION CONVENTION AND TOLEDO HAMFEST

de Bob Winston, W2THU

On 19 March 2005 I put on my Assistant Section Manager cap and drove to Toledo for my first ARRL Division Convention since I attended the Hudson Division in the early 1970s. I was joined by LEARA members Jeannie, KC8MNW (Newsletter publisher) and Eric, N8AUC (vice-president and license trustee.) It was a bleak, rainy day as Jeannie and I made our way west along the Ohio Turnpike. About 90 minutes later we arrived at the convention site, the Toledo Holiday Inn West where we were greeted by Ohio Section Manager Joe Phillips, K8QOE.

FCC Special Council Riley Hollingsworth, K4ZDH, was just beginning his session on recent FCC enforcement actions. In addition to speaking about deliberate interference, Riley entertained us with stories about unintentional radiators that were causing interference to licensed amateur radio operators. For example, a ham's neighbor in the Houston, TX area owned battery chargers for their scooters that radiated on the HF band. The ham complained to the FCC, which tried to explain to the incredulous neighbors that they must either stop using the battery chargers or filter out the spurious signal. The ham was good enough to give his neighbors free toroids which worked, but the neighbors eventually removed them. The problem escalated and Riley was forced to issue a citation warning of possible fines.

Although Riley is known for his enforcement actions, his most significant comment for the Convention attendees was in another arena. He told us that amateur radio is not getting the message across to the general public that we are an essential service in times of emergencies. He put the blame squarely on us. It's our fault and it's our mission to get the word out.

After K4ZDH was done, there were 6 seminars over the next 3 hours. The topics were WinLink2000, DX Seminar, Mobile HF Operation, High Speed Multi Media, Clubs Seminar and PSK-31. I attended the Mobile HF program which was taught by Darrell Pace, N8FTS, who is the Telecommunications Technician Coordinator for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Darrell is a good man to know if you want to learn about the ODNR communication system, but his expertise in HF mobile is also impressive. He emphasized the mobile antenna as the most important part of the installation. If you don't get the antenna coil above the metal then you're going to have a very inefficient radiator.

I also attended the Clubs seminar which was hosted by Dan

Romanchik, KB6NU. We took turns describing the type of club we represented. I told them that LEARA is the only amateur radio club I know that has a dinner meeting. None of the other attendees from Michigan, Kentucky or Ohio could name another club that did the same thing. We also discussed how to increase membership and how to raise funds.

The seminars were followed by an award ceremony and a banquet, that again featured Riley, K4ZDH who spoke about "Ham Radio and the FCC; Our Future Together." We hobnobbed with the top Great Lakes Division officials, like our Director, Jim Weaver, K8JE, Convention Chairman and former Division Director Gary Johnston, KI4LA, and Vice Director Dick Mondro, W8FQT. After the banquet was over, we were all asked to stay for the Royal Order of the Wouff Hong ceremony. Now, those of you who are new to ham radio may be unaware that there is a secret society of hams. Until Toledo, I was able to avoid this ceremony for almost 48 years in the hobby, but I had no place to hide. Because it is a secret, I can only tell you that Eric, Jeannie and I were admitted to the Royal Order and we are still functioning, more or less, as responsible adults. (And contrary to my earlier beliefs, this is not the group that mutilates squirrels.)

The following morning we drove a couple of miles to the Toledo Hamfest which is sponsored by the Toledo Mobile Radio Association. I had heard that this is one of Ohio's largest amateur radio gatherings. I would have to say that it is very comparable to Mansfield, taking up two large buildings at the Lucas County Recreation Center. There we found some familiar faces as AES Wickliffe had set up shop and was doing a brisk business. After walking around for a couple of hours and making some minor purchases, we headed back to Cleveland in the early afternoon.

In summary, the 2005 Great Lakes Division Convention was very well organized, provided informative seminars and sponsored a great banquet. Congratulations to all who worked so hard to make the convention a success.

Bob Winston, W2THU, Assistant Section Manager, NE Ohio

de W2THU (cont'd)*(Continued from page 2)*

ham gear would go up. The shocking answer came while attending the Toledo hamfest a few weeks ago in mid March. One of the large dealers was selling the Icom 706 for \$950.00. I couldn't believe it. Here was a rig that has been selling in the \$700 range for years and all of a sudden its price went up \$200 overnight. This is even faster than the escalation in the price of gasoline. I quickly reviewed the prices of other Icom products and even those of other manufacturers. Fortunately, I didn't see similar increases, but it appears that the prices for ham gear are on the rise. But, you might find bargains locally on the Swap and Shop net on the 147.015 repeater and at all of the upcoming hamfests throughout the region.

This is a reminder that once in a while an individual, affectionately referred to as a bozo by the amateur radio community, will attempt to interfere with your repeater QSO. Some bozos just key up a repeater over and over without identifying, while others make weird noises or occasional jibberish. This unfortunate conduct is designed to draw you into a dialogue with the offender that brings him or her some kind of pleasure. Historically, every one of these bozos has eventually been caught and turned over to the FCC for fines and sanctions at the regulatory level. For example, an ex-ham in California now faces fines totaling \$52,000.00 for deliberately jamming amateur radio repeaters. If you run into a bozo simply ignore him or her. No reaction means no fun for the jammer. I am surprised when I hear experienced hams let the bozo know that he is bothering them. Ignore the miscreant and he will shortly go away.

Those of you who have read this far into my column are probably the same 2 people that checked into our LEARA weekly net on St. Patrick's Day. Yep, that's the day I was net control and we might have set a new record for lack of check-ins. You just can't compete with the celebrants of the Emerald Isle. But, I do want to encourage more of you to check in Thursday nights at 8 P.M. on 146.76. It's an interesting, informative net, with clever good trivia questions that have stumped yours truly on several occasions.

I'm looking forward to this month's meeting at Dimitri's where we will enjoy another fine program and good camaraderie over dinner.

73 de Bob Winston W2THU

The LEARA School Bell to Ring Again*de Tom Bishop, W8TAB, John Radney, KC8FOC, and Sara Cechner, KC8KSU*

Calling all members! Are you interested in furthering your Amateur Radio operating privileges?

One of the results that came from our Member Survey last fall is that many of you are interested in taking a LEARA license class to upgrade your existing license and expand your current privileges on the HF bands.

An education committee is now in the process of being formed for just this purpose, and we'd like to know how many of you are serious and what upgrade class you'd like to see us tackle first.

We are shooting to start these classes along with the fall 2005 school year. Summer is probably not the time most of you want to be in class, and we'll need some time to put this together for you, get instructors lined up, and line up volunteer examiners (VE's) who can give you the convenience of having your last class be an opportunity to sit for the test.

If you want to join the committee, teach, and/or volunteer as a VE, see our article regarding the new Education Committee in this issue. We will be holding an organizational meeting (at a time & place to be determined by the response to this call for volunteers) to work out when and where to hold our first new class.

If you're interested in getting an upgrade, we're interested in knowing what level you think you'll be ready to tackle first, come fall.

Please call or email Sara, KC8KSU at 440-942-8787, or you can send email to education@leara.org if you are interested in teaching, becoming a VE, or taking a class.

For those who just can't wait to get their upgrades, we can recommend resources from the ARRL (www.arrl.org). Local ham radio "candy stores" carry many of those same books and Morse code teaching aids, and more. Also, both LCARA and CARS sometimes hold classes.

Upcoming Events

April

17 Cuyahoga Falls ARC Hamfest
<http://www.cfarc.org>
 Contact: Ted Sarah, W8TTS
 239 Bermont Ave.
 Munroe Falls, OH 44262
 Phone: 330-688-2013
 Email: w8tts@w8tts.com

May

15 Northeast Ohio Fox Hunt
 Contact: Mike Cegelski, K8EHP
 Phone: 216-252-6640
 Email: k8ehp@earthlink.net

20-22 DAYTON Hamvention & ARRL Convention
<http://www.hamvention.org>
 Contact: Hamvention
 PO Box 964
 Dayton, OH 45401
 Phone: 937-276-6930
 Email: info@hamvention.org

22 Cleveland Marathon
<http://www.clevelandmarathon.com>
 Contact: Jon McKenzie, KB9FEM
 Email: jmckenzie@cuycoares.org

28-29 Westlake Invitational Soccer Tournament
<http://wist.westlakesoccer.org>
 Contact: Eric Jessen, N8AUC
 Phone: 440-734-3146
 Email: n8auc@leara.org

July

17 Skybank Triathlon
<http://www.pacificsportsllc.com>
 Contact: Tom Kimball, KA8BZB
 Email: tomkimball@att.net

Volunteer Exam Dates and Locations

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
4/17	Elyria	6/4	Kirtland
4/30	Bentleyville	6/7	Cuyahoga Falls
		6/19	Elyria
5/1	Independence		
5/3	Akron, Pioneer	7/9	Akron, Red Cross
5/15	Elyria	7/10	Independence

Akron, Pioneer AR Fellowship - 2324 Manchester Rd., Akron, OH, 44314. Pre-registration preferred, check-in 6:30 PM, test at 7:00 PM, walk-ins allowed. **Contact:** Ronald D. Lieving, 330-724-5981.

Akron, Summit Co. American Red Cross - 501 W. Market St., Akron, OH, 44303. Testing at 3:00 PM, walk-ins allowed. **Contact:** Bruce M. Ferry, 330-929-2766, ak8b@arrrl.net

Bentleyville - Bentleyville Town Hall, 6253 Chagrin River Rd., (corner of Solon Rd & River Rd) Bentleyville, OH 44022. Testing begins at 9:00 AM, walk-ins allowed. **Contact:** Robert Gauss, N8ZB, 330-563-3328, n8zb@yahoo.com

Cuyahoga Falls - 3512 Darrow Rd., Stow, OH 44224. Test at 7:00 PM, walk-ins allowed. **Contact:** Bruce M. Ferry, 330-929-2766.

Elyria - American Red Cross, 2929 West River Rd., Elyria, OH, 44035. Testing at 1:00 PM, park in rear and enter through back door, walk-ins allowed. **Contact:** Charles S. Hall, 216-433-3036, ve@w8hf.com, www.w8hf.com

Independence - Independence Town Hall, 6652 Brecks-ville Rd., Independence OH, 44131. Doors open 9:00 AM. Pre-registration is appreciated, walk-ins are welcome. **Contact:** Gary S. Dewey, 216-642-9705, gdewey@en.com

Kirtland - Kirtland Library, 9267 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094. Testing at 12:00 PM, Walk-ins are welcome. **Contact:** Scott Farnham, 440-256-0320.

**** HAMFESTS - Many hamfests provide VE testing. ****

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEST CANDIDATES

For VE testing one must bring the original and copies of the current license and CSCE forms (if applicable), identification, and the exam fee. ARRL VEC's exam fees are \$14.00. Check with the contact person in advance for specific testing site requirements and any special test accommodations needed.